

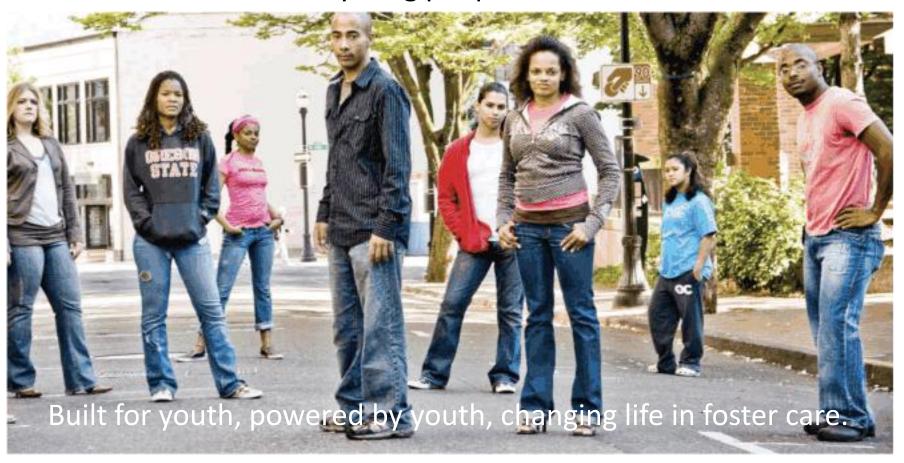
FosterClub's Youth Engagement Strategy: A Spatial Analysis

Daniel J. Knapp, MSEd, MSW



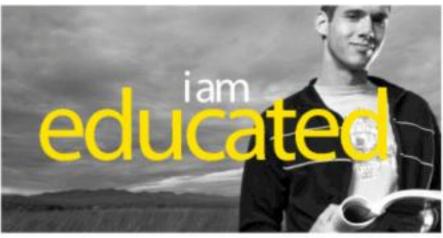
#### About FosterClub

The national network of young people in foster care

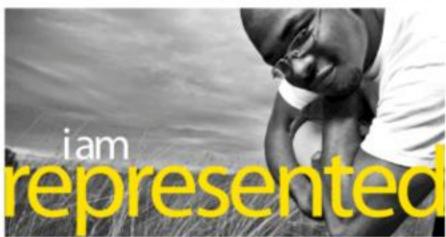


### About FosterClub









# The Role of Young Leaders



# Why Build a Network of Young People?

"[Foster care] taught me self-reliance and the value of dignity and respect. Even the negative experiences I had in foster care have motivated me to create change in the world around me, giving me a calling and the knowledge to pursue it. Foster youth are a fairly small contingent in a very large and competitive political arena.

We must amplify our voice to be heard.

And we cannot use a very effective tool for social change that some other youth can: we cannot leverage the social capital of our parents. We have a duty, both to ourselves and to future generations of foster youth, to do the best we can to fix the system."

# Objectives of Project

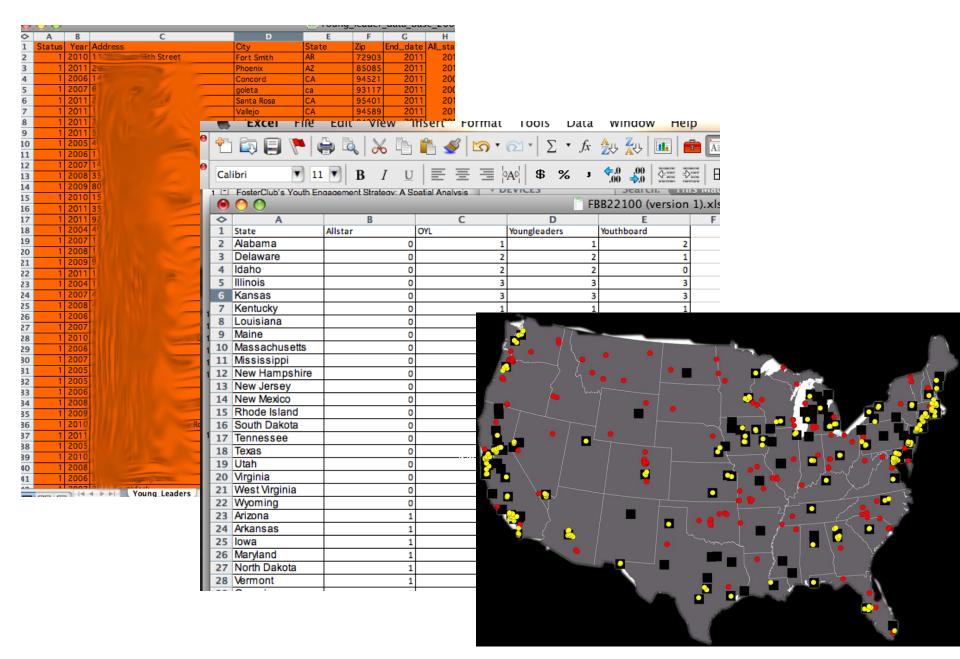
#### Primary goals:

Objective 1: To identify youth engagement "hotspots" and "deserts" in FosterClub's network.

Objective 2: To determine the effectiveness of FosterClub's proposed youth board engagement strategy.

#### Secondary goal:

Objective 3: Earn an A in my Community Mapping Class =)

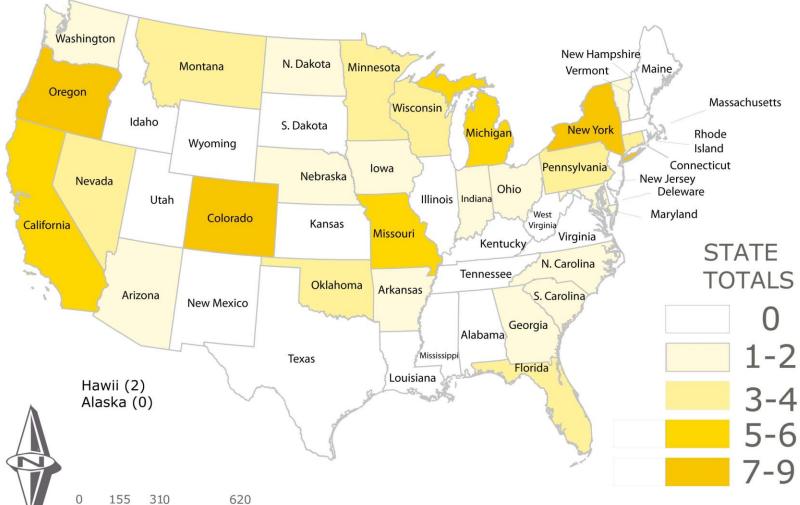


# All-Stars 2004-2011

Miles



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Outstanding Young Leaders 2009-2011

Miles

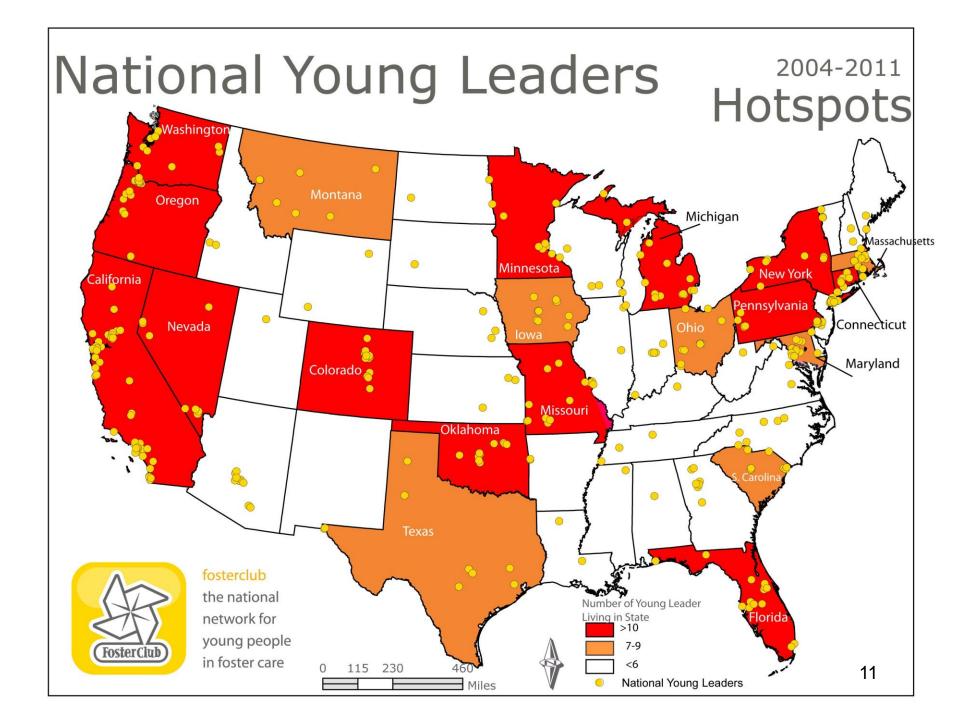


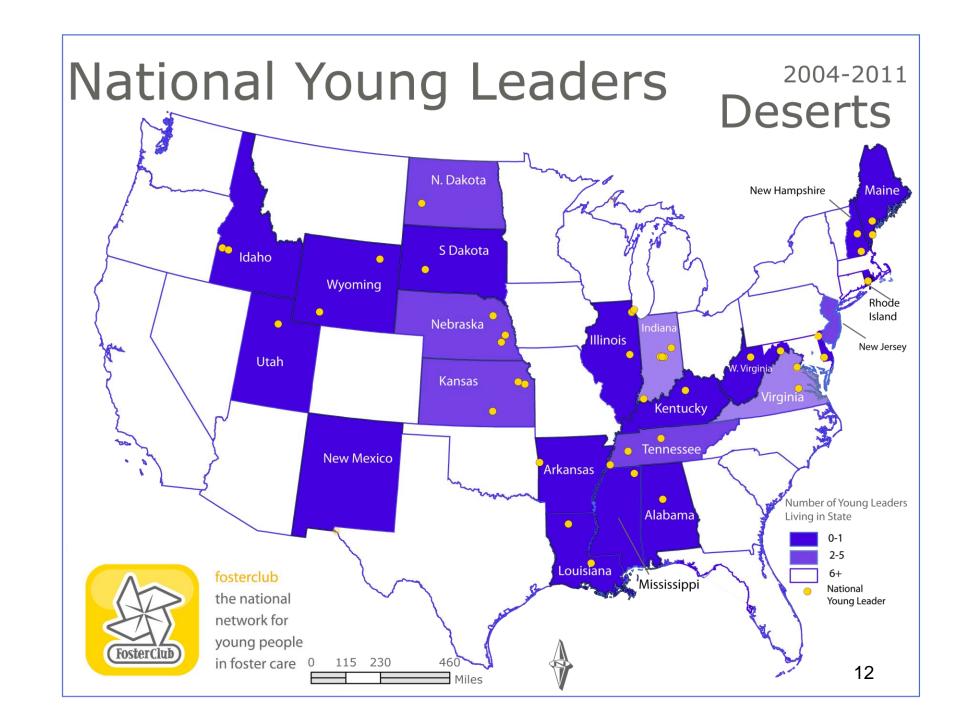
Map made by Daniel J. Knapp, 16 April, 2011.

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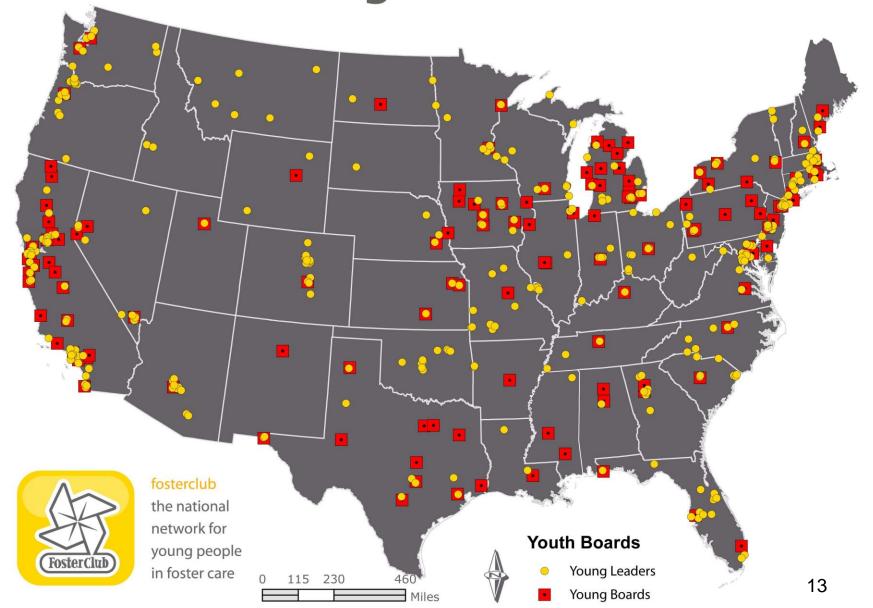






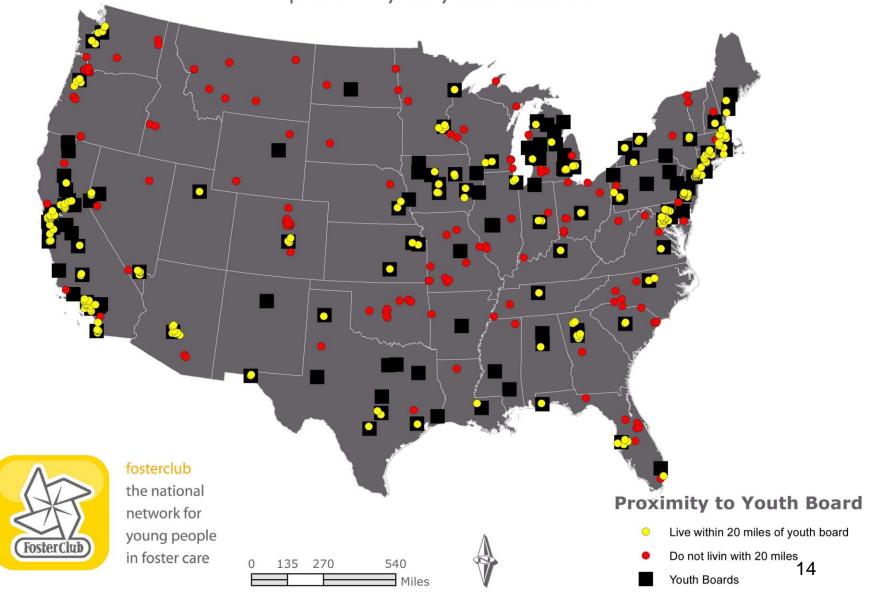


## National Young Leaders



# National Young Leaders

proximity to youth boards



# Proximity Results

 43% of FosterClub's Young Leaders within 20 miles of an identified Youth Board

 90% of FosterClub's Young Leaders live within 40 miles of an identified Youth Board

This is a strategic planning tool designed to analyze FosterClub's network activity across the country not a thermometer to measure or monitor State's Youth Engagement Activities.

Some states operate just one youth board that represents the entire state and meet in several different locations while other states operate several youth boards throughout the state.

Due to the transient nature of Youth Boards some of the data are approximate.

We do not know to what extent youth are actually engaged in the identified youth boards.

# **Further Questions**

- How extensive are youth engagement activities in states across the US?
- How important is distance in youth engagement strategies?
- How many young people in FosterClub's network actually are engaged in youth board activities?
- What is the relationship between youth boards and well-being outcomes?

# Implications for Child Welfare

- Do youth boards improve wellbeing outcomes among youth aging out of the system?
- States can use GIS to maximize their youth engagement activities across the state and even within counties by holding meetings in optimum locations that are close to subways, trains, near large populations of older youth.
- In general, use GIS to target resources and programs for older youth by accounting for unique populations that differ by geography.
- Improve service delivery.

# Removing Distance as a Barrier: An online Community of Support



# Thank you

For more information, contact Daniel J. Knapp at dan@fosterclub.org

# Imagine if...

...GIS technology was used to solve child welfare problems